

Making a complaint

We aim to provide a caring, high quality service and are always pleased to receive your feedback, both positive and negative. However, we recognise that we don't always get it right. If the service you received today has not met your expectations then we would like to know why not. All comments and complaints are taken seriously regardless of their nature.

We understand that it is not always easy to make a complaint and so will endeavour to sort out your concerns as quickly as possible. To help this process it is helpful if you can make your comments at the time the problem occurred or as soon as possible afterwards. This gives us the best opportunity to resolve the issues.

If for any reason you feel you are unable to complain directly to us there are a number of other routes you can take. These are:

- With the Commissioner of services (for example the local Integrated Care Board) or NHS England.
- To the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

We will respond to your concerns considerately, quickly and as effectively as possible in line with the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.



NHS complaints procedure

At anytime you can request that your complaint is handled under the NHS Complaints Procedure, which entitles you to be represented by the Independent NHS complaints advocacy services.

Every area of England has an independent NHS complaints advocacy service funded by the local authority. They can help you make a complaint about the NHS.

The NHS Complaints procedure is available through the Department of Health's website (www.gov.uk).

Independent NHS complaints advocacy services

Provides support in dealing with complaints.

Contact your local council or local Healthwatch to find out about independent NHS complaints advocacy services in your area



A complaint guide



How to make a complaint

Our complaints procedure is based on three stages detailed below and is designed to make sure that we work with you to resolve any complaints as quickly as possible.

Stage one - local resolution

You can make your complaint:

- In person / by telephone - ask to speak to the manager
- In writing (including email) - some complaints are easier to explain in writing, please give as much information as you can, then send to the manager as soon as possible.

We will contact you within three working days of receipt and together agree a plan on how the complaint and investigation will proceed. We will also agree with you a timescale within which our response will be sent.

The response will tell you how the complaint was investigated, the evidence considered, the conclusions reached and any actions taken.

When we look at your complaint, we shall aim to:

- Find out what happened and what went wrong
- Make it possible for you to discuss the problem with those concerned, if appropriate
- Make sure you receive an apology, identify what we can do improve the service

It may be helpful for you to meet with the manager and the clinician to discuss your concerns and if this is the case arrangements will be made for this to happen at a mutually convenient time

Complaining on behalf of somebody else

Please note that we keep strictly to the rules of medical confidentiality.

If you are complaining on behalf of someone else, we have to know that you have their permission to do so. We will require their written permission to do so unless they are incapable of providing this, through illness or in the case of a child. Only information relevant to the complaint will be disclosed.

If the 'complainant' does not want any information from their health records to be disclosed, this might affect the extent to which we can investigate and respond to your complaint.

Stage two - an internal review:

If you are unhappy with the response you receive from the local manager you can request an internal review by writing to the Regional Director of the service about which you raised our complaint. Your concerns will be reinvestigated by a senior member of staff who has not previously been involved in the original investigation. The investigation will also review how your complaint was handled at the first stage.

The outcome will then be reviewed by the Regional Director who will write to you with the final response.

Stage three - the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

If, following the internal review - stage two - you are still dissatisfied with the outcome of both internal investigations; you may request an external review of your complaint, from the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).

Who to contact

Stage one

The manager at the address where you received your care.

Stage two

The Regional Director/ National Head of service for the service you are complaining about. If unsure, their details will be provided in our Stage One response.

Building 1330,
Arlington Business Park,
Theale,
Reading,
RG7 4SA

Stage three

The Parliamentary and
Health Service Ombudsman
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

CQC National Customer
Service Centre
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

